

DWIGHT'S Journal of Music.

A Paper of Art and Literature.

VOL. III.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 1853.

NO. 18.

Dwight's Journal of Music,

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY,

TERMS....TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM, (IN ADVANCE.)

CITY Subscribers can be served at their houses by the further payment of fifty cents per annum.

For Rates of Advertising, see last page.

POSTAGE, if paid in advance, for any distance within the State, thirteen cents a year; if not in advance, twenty-six cents. To all places beyond the State, double these rates.

J. S. DWIGHT,.....EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

EDWARD L. BALCH, PRINTER.

OFFICE, No. 21 School Street, Boston.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED

At the OFFICE OF PUBLICATION, 21 School St.

By REDDING & CO., 8 State St.

" GEO. P. REED & CO., 13 Tremont Row.

" A. M. LELAND, Providence, N. I.

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A Sketch of Madame Mara.

From the German of F. ROCHLITS.

[Concluded.]

Thus passed four years in England; and Gertrude wished to see Italy at last. Having obtained a call, she journeyed in 1788 to the carnival at Turin, where she sang with complete success before the court, and, in the opera, before the public. In the following year she appeared in Venice, and there they prepared a triumph for her, worthy of a queen. Still she felt that the Italian opera (and the Italians then loved none but opera music) was not just her chosen place; add to this the raileries of her fine and envious Italian rivals; and, what perhaps, if not for her, yet for her companion, was the most decisive consideration—that, rich as the rewards proved, still here there were only scudi, instead of English guineas: and we cannot wonder that in 1790 she went back to London, whence she went only once, in fulfilment of a previous contract, to the following carnival at Venice.

She returned this time through France. Singularly it happened that, as she was passing

through one of the main streets of Paris, (in the autumn of the unhappy year 1792), she found herself in the midst of a popular *émeute*. Anxiously she made her companion raise the window of the carriage and inquire what was the matter. With frantic shout, as if he were announcing a popular festival, a fellow replied: "We are carrying the queen to the temple!" (the prison)—the queen—she whom Gertrude had last seen conquering all hearts in the full radiance of her beauty, loveliness and grace, and enhaloed by all the splendor that the world can give! Overpowered with terror and with pain, she uttered a loud, and at that time almost dangerous, cry, and she was thrilled through with a horror, from which she could not for a long time recover.

Her present stay in London was a continuation of the former. The sympathy of the public; the recognition, the reward of her excellencies as a singer remained, scarcely excepting the last years, the same: and that, in a ten years' residence in one place, was a new proof of the greatness of those excellencies, if any proof were needed. About the beginning of her fiftieth year, later than with the vast majority of singers, nature began to assert her supremacy over the powers which she had lent her; Gertrude's voice became considerably weaker. But as this took place in equal proportion through all the tones of her great compass, and as she did not lose the pleasing and euphonious quality, at the same time with the strength and silvery loudness of her voice; as all the other excellencies of the singer remained, requiring only to be used with her experience in other ways and other music; she still remained a wonderful, and where the place was not too large for her present degree of strength, transporting artist. The rooms, in which she had been wont to shine in London, were not such limited ones; the ascendancy, which she had there exercised over men's minds in her singing, had been greatly due to the imposing power and fullness of her voice; she was obliged to descend, but did not wish to do it in the place that had beheld her at her highest height. So she resolved in 1802 to quit London and, by the way of France, return to her German fatherland. Even then, at her departure, the London music lovers gave her a proof of their enduring esteem and sympathy: her last concert was so thronged, that it yielded about seven thousand thalers.

In Paris they departed from the usual custom, out of regard for her great fame and let her have

the Grand Opera theatre for a concert. The house was crowded full; but here they were accustomed to the screaming voice of a Maillard and other singers on those boards; so the notorious and dreaded Géoffroy in his journal wrote: "Madame Mara sang excellently, no doubt; only nobody heard any thing."

On her journey through Germany she met everywhere with the most honorable reception, and, for that country, with an uncommonly rich reward. Frankfort, Gotha, Weimar, were stations where she stopped and let herself be heard. From there (in February 1803) she came to us at Leipsic, and here I made her acquaintance. I shall be permitted, therefore, although I have nothing important to relate, to proceed somewhat more in detail.

Gertrude arrived in the evening; on the very next morning her rooms were filled, especially, with such of the most distinguished men of the city as had known, esteemed and loved her nearly forty years before, and had owed many happy young years to her art. I went to Hiller's, and he took me with him. I, who had eagerly read whatever had been written in the praise of Gertrude, but for the rest knew little of her; I, who was then so much younger and inexperienced than now,—accompanied Hiller with heart beating high and with the most certain confidence that here I was to find all far different and more splendid than in the every-day world. What was I not about to hear! what lofty conversations upon Art! and what tender scenes of recognition was I not to witness!—Hiller did not have his name announced, but walked directly in; I after him, lingering full of expectation at the door. We found those much respected men: Platner, Müller, Felix Weisse and some others. Hiller winked to these, and placed himself before Gertrude with his head already bowed with age, regarding her fixedly with a mingled look of seriousness and sport. "Do you know me?" he asked finally.—"No!"—"What!" cried Hiller. "You will no longer know me, *Trudel!*" This popular diminutive of her first name had been exceedingly disagreeable to her in her maiden years, and they used to plague her with it, when she was in her peevish humors. The word brought that time instantly before her. "Hiller! father Hiller!" she exclaimed with joy. "That am I with your leave!" muttered the old man. And both looked at each other again for some time; "God help us!" resumed Hiller finally; "we have grown

old!"—"And ugly, too!" replied Gertrude.—"Certainly!" said Hiller.—And in this tone the talk went on. No sentiment, no singing; not a word, then, or afterwards, of the anticipated high talk on Art. Frau Gertrude was not at home in all that; so that I heard her first tone only in the rehearsal for her first concert. All that might have been excused; but all she said, was expressed—(how else could she have done, after so long an absence from Germany, which had only recently become refined in that respect?)—in the most ordinary forms of speech and in the broadest dialect. This was like pouring ice-cold water over me, and with dripping plumage, it was some time ere I could mount again.

And how did I find her in other respects? As a woman:—I cannot describe it better, than by saying that, in form, in bearing, in features, in the character and manner of her speech, in her view and treatment of men and things, as in her whole demeanor, she seemed like a true-hearted, active, yet composed and self-possessed farmer's wife, perfectly unconcerned about other people and other things, from Thuringia or some other well-to-do, but by no means refined, province. But now: as a singer! That simple, large, unornamented style, which seeks its whole effect through tone, expression, accent;—that style in which she had delivered Handel's works particularly,—she seemed to have renounced: not, one might trust her, from the wish to conciliate the fashion which had just then begun to offer any price to a delivery extremely fluent, richly ornamented, and wrought into superfineness of detail; but because she was conscious, that her voice no longer had the strength and the sonority to execute that earlier style of singing satisfactorily. That voice, in fact, was rather weak: but it was still strong enough for our hall, which holds at the most 800 persons and is excellent in its acoustic structure; and as she was capable of the finest and gentlest *diminuendos* down to the softest whisper, and still remained distinctly audible; as she could still give, with complete equality as to power and volume, the always wide compass of her tones, from *B* to *thrice-marked D*; her feebleness was only noticed with regret by those who had before known her in the fulness of her strength. Nor did the veiled quality of her voice (as musicians say), which had taken the place of its once clear silver ring, injure her at all with others; it only lent to the softer passages a peculiar, milder charm.*

With such a voice, and in the above-named extremely fluent manner, perfectly polished to every fineness of expression or adornment, she sang as we have never heard the like till Mme. Catalani:—she to be sure had greater power, though in a far smaller compass of tones. To make the most of all that still remained at her disposal, according to her own fancy, her own taste and rich experience, Gertrude had prudently selected compositions of a somewhat undecided character and quite simple accompaniment. For instance, she produced a long and figurative aria by Andreozzi, and a smaller one, which her companion, Herr Florio, had, in the etymological sense of the word, "composed"—in which he came in too with the lifeless tones of his flute *obligato*, and Gertrude, with equal skill and amiability, blended her voice wonderfully with those tones. Finally she gave the principal scena and aria of Zenobia, from An-

fossi's opera of that name. In this we could recognize her exceedingly noble and finished delivery of Recitative: but in the aria, towards the end, her physical strength did not hold out.

From us she went to Berlin. Here too she found, both universal sympathy, and several old friends. The old Friedrich Nicolai, especially, a zealous friend of music from of old, busied himself in many ways for her advantage. He renewed his youth in lengthy reminiscences of the good old times, when the Mara and the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek* had found so many friends and venerated. Gertrude's concerts were crowded to excess and richly profitable. But there was one thing which her friends should not have asked of her, or she should not have granted: but Nicolai,—as he then was, if he had once a notion in his head, he never desisted—by continually returning to the same spot, made his way through, as a continual dropping of rain will wear through a stone. He wanted her, in fact, to take the first soprano part in a solemn performance of Ramler and Graun's "*Tod Jesu*," and by all means to sing "The heavenly prophets," as she had done more than thirty years before. She finally consented and sang. But the success was not, nor could it be, remarkable. Setting aside the fact that the airs in this work, products of the taste of the period about 1750, (the choruses, and essentially the recitatives stand above all temporary tastes) could not, in the wholly changed direction of these modern times, satisfy longer those who had formerly found perfect satisfaction in them, and who now imagined that it would be the same thing now, provided they were only properly delivered:—setting aside this fact, the Mara now possessed only in the smallest degree the qualities wherewith she had transported audiences by these songs, in her youth; and what she still possessed, she could not and ought not to have used here, if she would not profane the hallowed and the venerable; besides, she pronounced the German now as they pronounced it more than thirty years ago, and in a manner that was now considered common. Then there were hearers, who are not accustomed in such cases to ask, why or wherefore? but who simply give themselves up to the impression as a whole, and in no small perplexity; there were friends in despair, and there were newspaper critics puzzled to find terms in which they could as far as possible harmonize the present feeling with the opinion that had been long established.—In Vienna, where the public had not known the Gertrude of the Past, and where they were accustomed then, as now, to confer a high prize on those excellencies commonly summed up in the word *virtuosity*, even at the expense of what is higher and more intellectual;—in Vienna she was brilliantly received, and, as everywhere else, richly remunerated.

In 1804 she went to St. Petersburg, and in the following year to Moscow. In both capitals she found the same favor, the same good fortune, that she had everywhere before. To this was added the particular good will of some of the greatest houses, in which music was esteemed not as desirable and useful, but as indispensable to their intellectual life; and even many a peculiarity of the mode of life there pleased Gertrude remarkably. Then she resolved to spend the rest of her days in the old and spacious capital of the Czars. Thoughtful, clear and firm, as she had always been in what concerned her Art, she now

determined to appear no more in public, but merely to sing by invitation in noble private houses;—nothing in the large and aspiring style, but pieces suited to her present strength, and in which, by her well adapted mode of delivery and finished execution, she could still show herself an admirable artist. Besides this, she gave instruction in singing to young ladies.

Approaching now her sixtieth year, and freed from certain weaknesses of passion and of purposeless abandon, she began at length to grow more thoughtful and firm in matters not pertaining to her Art. There was no Florio now to quarrel with her always large income; she made provision for her long accustomed comforts against the day when age and incapacity awaited her. In about six or seven years she had gained enough to purchase herself a house in Moscow, and soon afterwards a pleasant country seat outside the city, besides investing a considerable capital in a respectable mercantile house. She lived very well contented, and thought this quiet way of life secured to her for the remainder of her days. But fortune played the trick on her, which it has played on every one, to whose skirts it has long clung unappreciated: namely, the trick of suddenly deserting one, just at the very moment when he begins to need it most, to prize its gifts the best, and to feel the most painfully conscious of its absence. Napoleon with his armies was approaching Moscow. Whoever could, was obliged to flee; and all the arrangements for facilitating the flight of so many thousands, were, in order to surprise the enemy and prevent counter-movements, made so short a time before the outbreak of the general calamity, that the most of the fugitives in the bewildering confusion saved barely anything except their lives. Of these was Gertrude.—Napoleon and his hosts retreated; she came back; her house was burned down, the merchant announced his insolvency, the noble and wealthy families did not return to the desolate ruins of the city; nobody was in need of a singer or a music teacher: she had nothing left but to wander on, and no man asked if it were with a bleeding heart.

Here then, she was, as if at the completion of a wide circuit, standing again almost at the very point where she had stood half a century before: poor and homeless, without counsel, without help. But as the child did then, so now the aged lady found sympathizing friends, and help, at least for present necessities. She went into the Germano-Russian provinces: especially in hospitable, music-loving Livonia did she find a favorable reception. She lived, partly at Reval, partly in the country, as an inmate in several respectable families, which shared with her what fortune had vouchsafed to them; and this was done with friendliest good will. She in return instructed the daughters in singing, and entertained the social circles by her own delivery of pieces suited to her present strength. Thus she lived through four years, according to her own confession, very pleasantly, and for the most part more contented than before, when she was heaped with fame and money. But age longs after independence and has need of a secured repose. She tried to prepare this for herself in the two places where she formerly had been universally known and for some time at home: she travelled (in 1819) to Berlin and London; but she did not accomplish her end. Returning to Germany, she tried the same experi-

* Does this recall the Sontag of 1853?—Ed.

ment in her native city, Cassel. Here she found the most marked reception, both on the part of the electress and of the entire public; but even here she was not successful in the end for which she came. Then she resolved on a return to Livonia and to the position she had left before her last journey, a continuation of which had been promised her by several respectable families that had grown dear to her; and there, so far as I can learn, she is yet living in her eightieth year (1830).

So oozes away the rich life of the greatest German singer, like the rich waters of the greatest German river; and since a description of the same, like a description of the Rhine, admits of no conclusion, we will add by way of close what Ernst Platner, her renowned old friend in Leipsic, said, when she had just gone from us in the year 1803. "It has given me great pleasure," said Platner, "to see her again; but I would gladly have renounced the pleasure, and been reconciled if, ten years ago, after the most perfect rendering of an oratorio of Handel, she had suddenly died; for I know of nothing more depressing and more dreary, than a really significant person who outlives himself."—And even *he* had to experience that same fate, in superabundant measure, in himself!

Sketches of an Opera Singer.

Did you ever, says a late Paris letter to the Boston *Atlas*, or rather, are you old enough for the name of FILIPPO GALLI to have reached you? Yet he was a great man . . . once . . . for many years . . . from 1807 to 1837; longer than last winter's great men, eh? He was born in Rome, of a highly respectable family of the middle class; he learned music as a pastime, but so great were his talents for the art, that his parents, not without opposition on the part of his mother, who dreamed a brighter destiny for her son, than that illumined by foot-lights, determined his parents to place him on the stage; accordingly, his education was confided to one of the most celebrated soprano singers of that cathedral-trained band which owes to the surgeon's knife the preservation of their fine voices. He made an early debut; he appeared on the first stages of Italy; tall, handsome, well made, witty, agreeable, his success was immense, especially in Naples, in the San Carlo Theatre, where he was the idol of the day and night.

For seven years of successes, Galli sang on the parts of grave tenor. What a voice! A fever lay on him; when he was cured he found the fever had carried the voice off with it. Imagine his discouragement! After some time, however, he found that he had a magnificent bass voice, and in 1813 he made his debut as a bass in Trieste, in a company where Ronconi's father, and Rosina Pinotti, Lablache's sister-in-law, played. His success was so complete that from this moment Rossini composed for him his best parts, and every part was a new triumph for artist and composer. They were on a footing of most affectionate friendship; one was never seen without the other; on the promenades, at the theatres, cafés, in society,—they shared the same table and often the same bed. They had just arrived in Milan, more affectionate than ever, in consequence of their labors in the *Gazza Ladra*, then in all the glory of novelty, when on a sudden the strangest rumors were afloat in the vicinity of La Scala Theatre: the composer and artist, in consequence of a quarrel about the way an air in the *Gazza Ladra* should be sung, had ceased to speak. Poor Italy had then, as now, nothing else to talk about except art and artists, and as she threw into this narrow channel all the intense temperament of her character, this news excited a whirlwind of emotions. Before the curtain rose, the vast audience in La Scala, agitated by its curiosity, was tossed as some storm-lashed ocean. Galli was

received with the enthusiastic applause which always greeted him. When he sang, the auditors became silent; perhaps he was never more touching, more impassioned, better in the part of *Ninetta's* father than this night. When he ceased, the plaudits recommenced; he was recalled five or six times, they would not allow him to leave the stage. Then it was Rossini's turn for applause, (in Italy, you know, the composer always directs the orchestra in person.) there was new excitement, and after the public had applauded and Rossini bowed sufficiently, the audience cried to Rossini and Galli: "Embrace and be friends again; make it up, make it up! *Vive Galli! vive Rossini!*" The two friends flew into each other's arms, weeping, amid immense acclamations.

In 1821 Galli came to Paris. He first sang at the Grand Opera, with his usual success. In 1825, he joined the company of Italian Opera, then composed of Mmes. Fodor, Pasta, Malibran, Sontag, Monbelli, etc. He staid here a short time and returned to Italy, where for eight consecutive years he remained a "star" of La Scala; successful in every piece but one. Then he went to Rome, to Madrid, and, tempted by the large offers made him, to Mexico. On his return, he sang in Barcelona, Madrid and Milan, where he bade farewell to the foot-lights, and applause, and fortune. During his whole life Galli had received an enormous income, varying between \$10,000 and \$30,000, but such was his generosity, his extravagance, and his negligence, that he returned even from Mexico poorer than when he went there. His table and his purse were open to all. When Rossini brought to him his engagement for Paris, he begged him to be economical in future. Galli promised readily, and told Rossini he would see the fruits of his kind advice at the end of the season. After the season closed the great maestro asked him if he had kept his promise. "Yes, indeed," replied he; "you know I got 20,000 fr. in debt every year; this year I have gone only 8,000 fr. in debt, so you see I have economized 12,000 fr. clear!" The last years of his life were sad enough; poverty oppressed, disease racked, charity supported him; and after all these triumphs, all these crowns, all this applause, and all this fortune, he had not enough to pay the church and the grave-digger. Jordan's Field was his last home. His friends had forgotten him; the crowd now applaud Napoleone Rossi.

The Ancient Music of Scotland.

The ancient music of Scotland has become a matter of faith or conjecture, so that no one arrogates to himself the knowledge to establish the facts of its truth, or the superiority of the whole, or of any neglected portion of it.

Music, like all other fine arts, has been progressive, being common to all ages and nations. From the accounts of Plato, the study of music was for a long time confined to the priesthood, and was considered sacred, and forbidden on all light occasions; but we can trace no accurate judgment of the relative excellence of the ancient music in the varied nations.

So far as Scotland is concerned, the first real account of its rise and spread is to be learnt in the various meetings of the clans during the rude and warlike times of the country.

The "Blackmatch," as originally organized through the Highlands in the feudal times, on their great days of assembly brought together the finest looking men their chiefs could muster, and also all the wandering and ancient bards, who performed extemporaneous airs and stories, accompanied with their harps and pipes to suit the nature of these occasions. Through these the national music of Scotland was kept alive, and the spirit of poetry kept floating from mind to mind without the aid of the printer, and perhaps, long before the Celtic nation had reduced the science to any positive rules.

Since the harp ceased with the feudal times, there appears to have been no musician of high merit in the Highlands capable of imparting, much less preserving, the music as then sung to its native words, or of giving that effect to its circulation which popular verses never fail to produce, al-

though there have appeared in Edinburgh, and other places, many industrious collections of the Scottish music, among the first of which was that of Oswald and McGibbons, who had the aid of Allan Ramsey, the author of the "Gentle Shepherd," to write verses to the air. It is delightful to look into the creation of the songs and airs of Scotland, because the most of these had a romantic origin in the love of their chiefs, or the return of some wanderer, the birth of an heir, or the settlement of some quarrel—while others, inspired from inward feeling, addressed themselves to the grandeur of the majestic mountains.

Among the most modern authors, King James the First, and also King James the Fourth, were celebrated composers, and onward to the period of James the Sixth may be reckoned the bright era of Scottish music. All these preserved composed, and discoursed most eloquent music and words, while one of the James's invented a new style of music, plaintive and melancholy, in which he was imitated by many of the Italians.

In reference to James the Fourth and Fifth, it would appear that the Scotch are now far behind them in their devotion to the gentle art; and even yet, while all the branches of polite education are fast progressing, the science of music has almost been a dead letter, at least in the education of the Scottish youth, except the small stir now beginning in the education of young ladies in superior seminaries; while, in Germany and other parts of of the continent, it has long been one of the elementary branches of education.—*Cock's Miscellany*.

A GERMAN'S IDEA OF TIME.—"Vivian," the sprightly Art critic of the London *Leader*, hits it off, characteristically, thus:

Immanuel Kant was the curse of his nation; an illustrious iconoclast, he dashed the majestic idol, Time, from its pedestal, proved to his countrymen that Time did not exist—was a fiction—an idea—a mere subjective phenomenon; and from that time (which was no time) the Germans have severely ignored the existence of Time! Hence their immeasurable in all things! their long books, long dinners, long pipes, long hair, long ballets, long operas, long-winded orations, long epithets—their slow coaches, slow movements, and slow conversaciones! Why should they hurry? *Tempus edax rerum?* A figment! Even those who recognize Time only think of killing it; Kant killed it! *s'ist doch wahr!* Amusingly illustrative of this contempt of Time, and utter disbelief in that venerable party's existence, was the display of Herr Schneider, the organist, at Exeter-Hall lately. He was engaged to play two solos in the intervals of the choral performances of our friends the Cologne singers. A splendid player Herr Schneider showed himself to be; but having once seated himself and commenced the performance, he, not recognising Time as more than a subjective phenomenon, fairly wearied the patience of a British time credulous public. He played and played and played and played. We yawned and fidgeted, and fidgeted and yawned, but still the terrible German held on his relentless way! At every moment he seemed coming to a close; delusive hope! he started off again to "fresh chords and quavers new," away! away, as if his life depended on it. A few mild hisses, monitory and minatory, produced no result. On! on! he went without a thought of pausing. Exasperated patience burst forth into ironical cheers and stampings; it was thought that by brave applause we might politely suggest to him that we had had enough. But still he kept on. He was not the man to be put down by clamour, sir! At last the thing became a joke—a painful joke—and only after five-and-twenty minutes assault upon our endurance would this fanatic quit his seat! Do you not see the necessary connexion between such an exhibition and the spirits of a nation whose language delights in words of this airy lightness and compendious brevity:

Schweriallendes gesantaumelrhythmentrankenbold!

Kant has done it all!

A Glance at the Present State of Music.

By DR. MARX.

From the "Universal School of Music."

The first glance we take at the present state of musical art, reveals to us a picture of musical activity so great and universal as may scarcely have existed at any previous period; excepting, perhaps, during those lovely days once shining upon Italy and Spain. Then, indeed, the stream of holy song gushed from the open doors of every church, flowed down from every pilgrim-crested eminence; from every balcony the clang of festive trumpets enlivened the banquets of nobles and princes, and, in the stillness of the balmy night, the trembling chords of mandolines and citherns mingled with the voices of tender singers. So our own country also resounded, in the days of Luther, with his songs of warfare. Powerfully exciting, inspiring, and confirming, they swelled from the church choir, and through the open doors spread over the crowded market-place; they filled the busy street with shouts of religious enthusiasm, and penetrated to the private family circle, the lonely chamber of the pious Christian.

That which, in those countries and those days, arose spontaneously as the inborn medium of expression of a people more easily excited, and inhabiting a country rich in nature's sweetest charms, or as the natural voice of holy zeal, has come down to us; not, it is true, as something foreign to our nature—for it had been lying dormant in the deeply poetic mind of our German nation long before it was awakened—but still as something acquired, in the form of a gift presented to us for our enjoyment, and as an ornament of our existence.

Thus are our public gardens, our social circles, and our festivals, everywhere filled with streams of harmony; bands of music, consisting of numerous instruments, the number of which is ever increasing, parade before our military hosts, or make the ball-room tremble with the "phrensy of delight." Where is the town, however small, which does not attempt to get up, at least, a series of winter concerts? How many virtuosi, how many quartet-societies, how many concerts of every kind and description, divert the music-loving multitudes of our larger cities! At what time were there seen almost everywhere so many opera performances almost the whole year round? What time or country* can show any thing equal to our musical festival and musical societies? Or, lastly, in what age, before the present, has music been so universally recognized as an indispensable branch of education, both in word and in deed, and with such sacrifices of time and money?

For this diffusion of music, the lively interest universally taken in its cultivation, in every sphere of life, accords proportionate means. However great the cost of instruction, instruments, printed music, &c., every family in the middle as well as the higher ranks of society endeavours to obtain them. There is no where a lack of teachers; singing is practised in every school; seminaries, universities, and special music schools, continue the instruction and lead it to a higher point; everywhere academies of singing, instrumental and general musical societies, established for the purpose of collective practice and performance, are found increasing. Municipal authorities and governments bestow attention upon, and provide means for the performance of works of art in chapels and in choirs, or for the musical instruction of the people; our publishers and music-sellers diffuse the works of all nations and all times to an extent and in a form unprecedentedly cheap and convenient; even the acquisition of good instruments has been considerably facilitated by the progress of the mechanical arts.

Wonderful power of the art of sound! To open all hearts! engaging the interest and drawing contributions even from those who, for want of instruction, or from a naturally defective organization, are denied a participation in its pleasures; who willingly make sacrifices for those belonging to them, and then step aside, content

with the feeling of having afforded to others a pleasure which they themselves cannot enjoy!

Whence has music this power? and how does it reward our love and sacrifices?

It has this power, and is all-powerful over mankind, because it seizes upon every fibre, sensually and spiritually, upon the whole body and soul, sensations and ideas. The rudest nature thrills under the effect of its powerful strains, and is soothed by its sweetness. Its sensual effect is in itself irresistibly enchanting; for the merely sensual hearer feels that this trembling of the nerves penetrates to the inmost depth of the soul, that this corporeal delight is purified and sanctified by its hidden connection with the origin of our existence. But he who has experienced in his own person how music calls forth, and leads, at pleasure, the most tender, powerful, and secret feelings of the soul, imparting brightness to its mysterious twilight, awakening it to a dreamy consciousness; he to whom the deepest perceptions and ideas present themselves as spirits diverting him from, and raising him above, the fluctuating play of feelings and emotions; who is, in short, aware that our existence would be imperfect, did not the world of sound supply the deficiency: such a one knows that the most intellectual pleasure of the senses derived from hearing music is merely an attraction to its spiritual fountain, from which are drawn purity of feeling, elevation of mind, the contemplation of a new and boundless world of ideas, and a new sphere of existence.

The one is the all-penetrating, universally prevailing power of sounds; and the other, the promise of this art—a more elevated and blissful existence, which we, knowing or anticipating, confide in, and to which so many of us and ours are devoted.

But its nature, like man's own, is twofold; partaking both of the sensual (*material*), and the mental (*spiritual*). It has power to raise us from a rude and barren state of being, to a higher, more susceptible, and spiritual existence; to soften and refine our feelings, to awaken in us ideas of pure and perfect humanity; to exalt us above the human sphere to the confines of the Divine, and, in this mental elevation, fill our hearts with love and holy zeal for every thing that is good and noble. But this self-same power of melody and harmony may also bury the yet unrevealed indwelling spirit in the alluring waves of excited sensuality, obliterating from the soul every noble feeling, and every virtuous power, and gradually leading it to that thoughtlessness, that want of principle and desire for sensual pleasure which dissolves or stifles every noble disposition, and in which train are found those strange twins, satiety and insatiability, and that terrible condition of the mind, utter indifference.

How then does this dangerous but dear art reward our love and our sacrifices?

In art itself, all is pure, noble, and good. It is the fault of our weakness, if to us its gifts become poison; if we linger inactively upon the threshold of its sanctuary, or allow its call to die away unheeded, and, instead of joining the company of the initiated in its sacred halls, lose ourselves in the courts destined for the offal of the sacrifices.

Many things have conspired to embitter the pure enjoyment and interrupt the pure and honest cultivation of the art of music in the present times. The waves of mighty events are penetrating into, and acting upon, every form of social and spiritual life, while the nations are still without a uniting and guiding principle of mental elevation*. Stupendous events and recollections have called forth, on the one hand, vehement desires, and a prevalence of violent and suddenly changing impressions; on the other hand, its opposite—inanition, and a deep longing for peace and quietness. In both directions, the material, as a means of violent excitement, or of soothing the mind into a pleasurable repose, has acquired undue preponderance over the spiritual element of art, and we see repeated a spectacle often witnessed before: that, in such moments when the tension of the German mind and character, in the masses of the people and those who speak to their hearts, suffers re-

laxation, foreign influences, especially the frivolity and ready loquacity of the French, and the enervated sensuality of the Italians, wrest the sceptre from native talent. In respect to music, it is in the opera especially that foreign mediocrity at such times gains its easiest victories, and carries everything before it in its rapid march. For, how many different means are not resorted to in these productions, to take the hearer by surprise and confound his judgment, so that their worthlessness remains concealed beneath that novelty of their effects! And how can the evil influence thus brought to bear upon the highest and most commanding point, fail to affect, in a similar manner, every other sphere and branch of art?

Are we compelled, on the one hand, to censure the mind-debasing materialism of the foreign opera, whose tendency in our days is the more irresistible, because we are still accustomed, indeed forced, on account of the more highly developed political and public life of our western neighbours, to look to their country as the balance-wheel of the great European clock; so, on the other hand, we acknowledge that which is *positively good* in those operas, and which has been too much neglected by our writers and composers for the theatres; viz. dramatic, or at least scenic, animation, and the progression from mere individual conditions to public and more universally intelligible and interesting relations of life. Only when this *positive* element shall have been more generally perceived and appreciated by our poets and musicians, amongst all the poverty, lowness, and errors of the foreign opera—then, and not till then, will German art, in all other respects so much more pure and true, be able to triumph over its rival in the theatre, as certainly and signally as it has done everywhere else.

For Dwight's Journal of Music.

SONGS*

From the German of H. HEINZ.

Evening Song.

When I on my couch reclining,
Lie veiled in night,
Then a sweet form floats before me,
A beautiful child of light!

And when in silent slumber
Just closing my eyes do seem,
Then glides that form so softly
Into my happy dream.

And with the dream at morning
It melteth not away,
But in my heart I bear it
About with me all day.

The Voyage.

I stood and leaned upon the mast,
And every wave I counted;
Adieu, adieu, my fatherland!
O fast the good ship bounded!

We passed the home of her I love,
The window panes were blinking;
I gazed, and gazed, but saw no sign,
Ah! none of me was thinking.

Ye tears, O do not dim these eyes,
That clear shall meet the morrow!
My poor, poor heart, O do not break
With all this weight of sorrow! J. S. D.

* Mendelssohn has composed music to these songs, for two voices, which is soon to be published here by Messrs. G. P. Reed & Co.

IMPROVEMENT IN ORGANS.—Few people who were at the Inaugural ceremonies of the Crystal Palace will fail to recollect with what fine effect the sacred chants and choruses were given, nor how greatly that effect was enhanced by the pealing tones of the magnificent organ that swelled forth with such majestic beauty and grandeur, filling the vaulted transepts and reverberating the solemn echoes from the dome and the remotest angles of the building.

* Be it remembered Dr. Marx is writing in and of Germany.

* The reader will recollect that this was written at the commencement of the struggles on the continent.—Tr.

The peculiar sweetness, softness, fulness and richness of these sounds still linger pleasantly in the ear, and it will be long ere we forget either its deep-toned bass or its clear and silvery treble. Being a connoisseur in such matters we had the curiosity to examine this organ, and found that its superior excellence was owing to a new and marked improvement in organs that has not yet been brought before the public. We will attempt a description of the instrument.

This organ, which is constructed on a new principle, surpasses all other common organs by an important improvement in the wind-chest. The invention consists, in constructing air chambers running the entire length of the scale and sounding-board, each chamber supplying all the pipes of a single stop with wind; consequently there are as many air chambers as stops; also, each pipe has its own wind connected with the air chamber. Sliders are entirely dispensed with; it is not easy to adjust sliders, so that they may move readily and yet fit closely enough to prevent the escape of wind, as they are affected by the atmosphere. In this organ, that great defect will never occur, and the stops will move easily in every state of weather, without escape of wind.

By this improvement, there is also attained almost double power, more promptness, evenness and sweetness of tone, and there is an especial advantage gained by its easy wind and attachment of action. This improvement was invented and patented June 15th, 1852. This organ was manufactured and exhibited by Alb. Gemunder & Brothers, Springfield, Mass, and may be examined at any time at the Crystal Palace.—*N. Y. Mirror*.

FROM A FORTHCOMING OPERA.—The scene represents a dark wood in all the murkiness of midnight, which will, however, be rendered distinctly visible from all parts of the house by means of additional lamps.

(*Music*—Adagio movement to express that the moon is behind a cloud, but may shortly be expected to rise.)

(Enter Florello.)

Flo. "No sound is heard."

(*Trombones, bassoons, etc., growl their lowest notes to imitate the profundity and depth of the silence.*)

"No human form I see."

(*Here he stares earnestly at a numerous and fashionable audience, who confirm his assertions with bravos and clapping of hands.*)

"I falter—faint—my breath begins to flee."

(*Wind instruments to suggest the deficiency of breath, and express his want of expression.*)

"With two stiletos in my heart I lie."

(*Adagio movement. Florello puts his hand to his heart, and draws two sighs, but not one of the daggers. He rises, falls back against the stump of a tree, and the music expresses that he has torn his inexpressibles.*)

"Unseen," (*Rub-adub-dub*) "unheard," (*Tan-ta-ra-ra*) "alone," (*Jang-jang-crash*) "I die—die—die—" (*Diminuendo—Tweedle-dum! Tweedle-dee! Tweek-ee-ee-ee*)—and the music and the hero die away together.—*Geo. University Mag.*

SUPERIOR VIOLINS.—George Gemunder, 304 Broadway, New York—to whom was awarded, by a jury of the Royal Commissioners, connected with the exhibition of the Industry of all Nations at London, in the year 1851, in consideration of having exhibited a Joseph Guarnerius Violin, (chiefly) and for three other Violins and a Viola—a Prize Medal, has now, by a new method, improved the tones of his instruments in such a high degree, that they produce the same character of tone as those of the best far-famed Italian makers, without having the French method of preparing the wood by chemical process. By this mode of making Violins, the wood retains its whole power, whereby the tone is not only constantly improving, but is preserved as long as the instrument last.—*N. Y. Mirror*.

—A curious relic, lately sold in London for £2 15s., was Handel's tuning fork, giving the note A, interesting "not only from its connection with the immortal composer, but as showing the rise in pitch since his time, amounting to nearly a whole tone."

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, AUGUST 6, 1853.

READ—REFLECT—ACT!—For the benefit of our readers and ourselves (for are not our interests identical?) we copy here a nice little article which we find in an exchange paper. The case is certainly "well put," and we can assure our readers that it matches our case point for point:

"To Each and Every Delinquent!"

"We want our dues."

"We are compelled to pay cash for our paper and printing."

"We pay cash for rent—cash for type-setting—cash for bread and butter for our families, &c."

"The paper that you now hold in your hand is furnished to you at a heavy outlay of time, labor, anxiety and money, and you do wrong to withhold your subscription!"

"Stop the paper if you please but first pay what you owe."

This, of course, is addressed to "whom it may concern," and not to those who have long since graduated from or who never entered the aforesaid class of "delinquents." The system of *payment in advance* is indispensable to the existence of a journal that must pay its way punctually from day to day. The fifty or sixty dollars which this day's paper costs us, we must pay this day: how then can we wait to the end of the year with the uncertain chance of getting the little two dollar subscriptions on which our enterprise depends?

The New Piano Forte of M. Sax, Senior.

The newspapers, for some weeks, have contained hints of a great improvement in our universal parlor instrument, recently made in Belgium, by M. Sax, the father of the father of the numerous family of *Sax-horns*, *Sax-tubas*, and the various intermarrying cousins which compose the homogeneous, or we might say *homo-tonous* elements of each and every brass band now in vogue. This latter gentleman is named Adolph Sax. And if Sax *filis* has opened a new era of brass, Sax *père* has perhaps atoned for it by a beautiful and simple method of enhancing the heavenly resonance of strings in that little domestic temple or pantheon of harmony which a good piano-forte is. The peculiarity of the Sax piano, as we find it described, is just one of those very beautiful, very complete, and seemingly very obvious suggestions, which one would fancy might occur to any thinking person, but which it is the privilege of genius once in a century or two to "happen" to get hold of. As we have seen no full description of it in English, we translate for our readers a very clear account furnished by M. Léon Kreutzer to the *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* of May 29th. He is reporting of a reunion of artists, which took place, by invitation of M. Sax, in Paris, where he heard the new piano played upon by several of the best performers.

"Compare," says M. Kreutzer, "the tone of the violin with that of the guitar: the force and brilliancy of the first are not more characteristic, than the feebleness and thinness of the second. Is it owing to dimension? Surely not, for the violin has altogether the disadvantage in respect of size. It depends solely on the arrangement of the strings. Look at the violin: from the fret where the pins hold them prisoners, they rise by a gentle ascent to the bridge which supports them, and then sink on the other side of the instrument. Look, on the contrary, at the guitar: its strings

follow a direction absolutely parallel with the plane of the sounding-board. From this seemingly slight and unimportant difference results the beauty of the sounds of the violin, and the meagreness of the sounds of the guitar. Given the angular arrangement of the strings, and we have brilliancy and vigor; given the horizontal arrangement, and we have feebleness and impotence. This fact established, let us consider the case of the piano.

"Open it, and what do we see? An infinite number of strings arranged parallel as in the guitar, and drawing with a weight of 5,000 kilograms upon a frail plank of pine, which has to be supported by a double, or even triple barrier, of oak or iron. Now, with these barriers applied to the sounding-board, the vibration is gone, it is the mute upon the violin, it is the cold in the singer's throat. Yes; but various remedies may be employed to obviate these inconveniences in the piano. Adopt, for example, the system of angles used for the strings of the violin. Very well; but then the strain of the strings will become enormous. We shall no longer have to deal with 5,000, but with 20,000 kilograms, it may be; a bridge of iron would not resist that. Happily, M. Sax, senior, had a resource in readiness. In the first place he says to himself: The principle of angles by means of a bridge, for the direction of the string, is one of absolute utility; then, by a very simple calculation, he evades those stern requirements of the sounding-board, which have caused, alas! the death of so many pianos. The string A shall weigh upon the bridge with a weight, we will say, of ten kilograms; but the string B, its obliging sister, passing underneath the bridge, shall raise it by as many kilograms; then, after having traced an angle in opposite directions, the two strings will run along parallel to the point where the hammer is to come to strike them; and so on, in the same way, throughout the vast scale of the entire instrument, so that the sounding-board, delivered, like a vigorous child, from its barriers, its restraints, its leading-strings, shall vibrate in full liberty. The bridge, depend upon it, will support the entire burden, a burden really light, or rather none at all through this equipoise and neutralization of forces. Then the sounding boards, free and independent, may grow old with impunity, and will even grow better as they grow older, like those marvellous ones of Amati and of Stradivarius, which sound more pure and brilliant two centuries after they were made.

"Persuaded of the perfect exactness of the principle, which I have just explained, M. Sax constructed a first piano according to his theory; an imperfect piano, no doubt, in its mechanism; but he reasoned wisely in overlooking imperfections of detail, and fastening first of all upon the principle as such.

"In Belgium this discovery made a great sensation; it was approved, appreciated at its full value by men the most experienced and the least liable to the attraction of mere novelty. M. Fétis, the profound theoretician, in a Report addressed on the 8th of May, 1851, to the Brussels Royal Academy of Science, Letters and Fine Arts, learnedly pointed out the advantages which the manufacture of the piano will receive from the discovery of M. Sax. He describes the impression which the new instrument produced the first time it was heard. 'M. Sax,' says he, 'at first saw fit to apply his system to a little old square

piano of Lichtenthal, an instrument of dull and short sonority; its mechanism, completely used up, was composed only of hammers too small, which wavered and had no rectitude nor firmness of action; and finally the keys were in perpetual oscillation and continually rattling. With this *fine* instrument the artist sought to realize his great ideas. Having removed the sound board, he replaced it by another of only half the thickness of those generally used, and he employed no barrier. Then he established his bridge according to the principles before explained, stretched his wires, readjusted for better or worse the old Lichtenthal mechanism, and finally one of the intelligent sons of this man of genius sat down to play upon this cheaply made piano. Instantly the passers in the street stopped and tried to divine where the great orchestra they seemed to hear could be. It got rumored about. Several artists hastened to go and try the new instrument for themselves, and they were struck with admiration. What particularly astonished them was the long reach of the vigorous and pure sounds, and the power of the basses in a square piano of the smallest size. These results had been obtained at the first effort, without any gropings, and with the certainty which every high intelligence derives from a principle.

"M. Sax, senior, being, as great inventors often are, a little careless and indifferent, let the time pass without turning his discovery to much account, when a mournful event led him to Paris. In the space of a few weeks M. Sax lost two daughters and a son; it was then that M. Adolph Sax earnestly besought his father to quit a place so fraught with sad remembrances, and to come and establish himself in Paris. M. Adolph Sax saw that the progress of the art, as well as the reputation of his father, were interested in having the new principle, that should preside over the construction of pianos, placed in the clearest light before competent artists. Such was the purpose of the little reunion of which I have spoken, and at which were present M. Adolph Adam, member of the Institute, the distinguished pianists, MM. Fumagalli, Brisson, Dollingen, &c., and where all possible experiments were made with most minute exactness and impartiality.

"MM. Adam, Fumagalli, &c., first executed on the Sax Piano,—a square piano of small size and with strings perpendicular,—a piece, which they afterwards repeated on a square piano with strings *oblique* (and consequently longer), the most perfect one that could be selected from those made on the received plan. I do not believe that I deceive myself when I affirm that the superiority of the Sax piano was universally recognized, and that the sonorous power of the instrument constructed on his system, seemed at least triple that of the rival instrument.

"The new piano was then tried against a Grand piano, of large model, which combined all the desirable improvements. Here there was very nearly an equality as regards intensity, but not as regards purity, of sounds. The same note, struck first on one and then on the other of the instruments, gave almost the same resonance. In the piano made upon the old system, it seemed equally powerful, but less pure and less homogeneous.

"For myself, I was not contented with these tests alone. I had heard it objected, that the intensity of the sound would injure its clearness and make it confused. I wished at once to bring this

to the test of observation; I interrogated the new piano carefully; I confined myself to executing, on the lower portions of the instrument, close harmonies and those intentionally somewhat harsh, in order to convince myself of the perfect independence of the various resonances; and I acquired the conviction that if the Sax piano is remarkable for the power of its sonority, it is perhaps still more so for its incorruptible precision. I tried for instance such harmonic sequences as these: C (the low C of the violoncello), E \flat , G \flat , A; B, D, F, A \flat ; B \flat , D \flat , E, G; and musicians endowed with a fine ear easily recognized each of these notes individually, whereas upon other pianos they perceived only the vague and blurred sensation of the *diminished seventh*. The Sax piano, then, may seem created not only to vie against the orchestra in power, but also to elucidate and *purify*, if I may use the word, the execution of those learnedly and closely woven works of the composers of the last century,—works over which the modern piano, in spite of its immense improvements, has always cast a light veil of confusion.

"Such are the fruits of the invention of M. Sax. And when we reflect that these beautiful results have been obtained in the most defective conditions, upon an instrument of the smallest dimension, we cannot but do justice to the fecundity of the principle which has guided the ingenious maker, and predict for his discovery the most brilliant future, the most legitimate renown."

A Monster Concert by Young Ladies.

Seldom has it been our lot in sweeping the musical firmament with our telescope, to report a new phenomenon of such entirely strange and formidable size and aspect, as the sign which we have just read in the Southern heavens. We have given our readers a pretty faithful almanac of the motions of the regular planets, of the risings and settings of the fixed stars, the comings and goings of the comets, &c., in the universe of music. But neither the blazing "monsters" in England, nor the Great and Little Bears of St. Petersburg, nor Mozart's "Jupiter" with all his satellites; nor the meteoric Wagners of Germany; nor the far streaming comets of Jullien's coming and DeMeyers gone, shaking their horrid hair in wonderful fantasias; nor Sontag and the sweet influences of vocal Pleiades (the queen one of whom is silent since last year); nor, in short, the whole Milky Way of Yankee musical "Conventions;"—can offer anything as novel and as startling as this long chart that just now lies before us.

It is the programme of an annual Concert by the pupils of the "Madison Female College," in Madison, Georgia, which came off on the evening of July 27th, under the auspices of Prof. G. C. Taylor, "musical manager and director." And if this is a specimen of the scale on which they "do up" the music in the educational seminaries down South, we would advise our German encomiast, "Hoplit," to look there rather than to Boston, for the "music of the Future."

Said programme first sets forth the names of each and every performer, to the number of *one hundred and thirty*, each with the prefix of *Miss*, with the solitary exception of one young "master Rossini," bearing the professorial patronymic. These consist of 97 young lady pianists, 11 young

lady guitarists, 3 young lady harpists, 13 young lady violinists (!), 1 young lady violist (!), 4 young lady violoncellists (!!!), and 1 young lady contrabassist (!!!!). These are the regulars (pupils); besides whom 22 "irregulars" are mentioned. The entire programme, reader, would be too much for you; we select a few of the most notable items. It seems these young pianists fire in platoons, occasionally flanked in some of their exploits by the light archery of fiddle and guitar strings, or the deep artillery of that Amazonian double bass. After an introductory Grand March, comes Part First, of which we may as well give the whole:

1. Overture—To the Caliph of Bagdad, (on one, three, seven and nine pianos,)..... Boieldieu.
2. Wild Bird—Class; with Piano and Contra Basso Accompaniment,..... Von Weber.
3. Polka—Fire Fly, (9 Pianos,)..... Fowler.
4. Duet—Josephine Polka, (9 Pianos,)..... Thos. A' Becket.
5. Song—Ossian Serenade—Class; with Piano, Harp and Contra Basso Accompaniment, (By request,)..... Dodge.
6. Airs—Selections from "Bayadere," (5 and 3 Pianos,)..... Auber.
7. Duet—Tyrolenne; from "La Fille du Regiment," (3 Pianos,)..... Donizetti.
8. Song and Chorus—Gypsy—Class; with Piano Accompaniment,..... M. Dix Sullivan.
9. Duet—Polka Favorite, (9 Pianos,)..... Julien.

From Part Second we may single out two items, viz:

1. Quintetto—Composed and Arranged for 114 hands on 9 Pianos, 4 Violins, 3 Guitars, 2 Violoncellos, 1 Viola, 1 Harp, and 1 Contrabasso—(First Violins played by the Leader and Master Rossini A. Taylor, aged 7 years—all other instruments by Young Ladies,..... Geo. C. Taylor.
4. Song—Sweet Home—Accompanied with the Harmonicon or Musical Glasses, an instrument invented by Benj. Franklin, (By request,)..... Paine.

Of the third part it certainly will be enough to give the leading item; how the senses and imagination of the audience after the intensely harrowing excitement of such a composition, could hold out to hear the eight more pieces on the programme, is a mystery to us, unless there were the quickening power of genius in it. It reads as follows:

1. Battle—Musical Combat, or Struggle for American Independence, being a Descriptive Fantasia, in which "God save the King" represents England, and "Yankee Doodle" the United States.
Argument.—Heavy Cannonading—God save the King (England) makes the attack—is repulsed by Yankee Doodle (United States)—God save the King in the ascendancy with light cannonading on both sides; Yankee Doodle gaining with heavy cannonading on both sides—God save the King almost victorious—Yankee Doodle makes a last effort, when during a desperate struggle on both sides, Yankee Doodle becomes sole occupant of the (musical) field; After which Hail Columbia is introduced, illustrative of the heartfelt gratitude of "Our Country"—(9 Pianos, 17 performers. The Pianos to the Audience's left take God save the King—those to the right, Yankee Doodle,)..... Geo. C. Taylor.

New Music.

Oliver Ditson, from his ever-multiplying publications, sends us copies of a great variety, both of sheet music and of entire works. We notice for the present, only one:

The opera of *Norma*, by V. BELLINI, with Italian and English words. This is the first of a promised series to be called "Ditson's Edition of Standard Operas." Here we have the vocal score complete, with piano-forte accompaniment, of the great modern Italian lyric tragedy, which has made the fame of Grisi and so many *prime donne*, and which put the crown upon Bellini's reputation. As a whole we never liked it as well as the *Sonnambula* with its fresher and more wholesome melody; its pathos, exquisite as it is, has seemed too prolonged, too uniform in tone and hence enfeebling to the hearer. Yet there can be no doubt of its great merits. Its popularity has been almost unbounded; and is it not the fertile treasury whence were drawn year after year the cavatina for the

debut of each star soprano, duets for concert-room and parlor, themes for piano-forte fantasias, and for innumerable instrumental show-pieces for violin, flute, oboe, clarinet, arrangements for brass bands?—and we are not sure but it has served the turn of psalm-book makers. At all events, a library of modern standard operas would be a strange thing without *Norma*.

But of *Norma* we have no need to speak; it is the new edition that claims our attention. And we can freely say that Mr. Ditson, at the low price of two dollars, has here made this opera accessible to almost every music-lover, and in a form convenient and beautiful; type small, but very clear and neatly, elegantly cut; good paper; good shape, namely a small quarto; and a substantial paper binding with old gothic-looking illuminated sides and red edges. Hundreds of opera *habitués*, though they may have but the barest smattering of the art of reading music, will wish to possess for reference sake this copy of the entire *Norma*; how it will brighten up melodious reminiscences, and reconnect the broken threads of memory!

Then again, when the amateur singer of a single song or two from *Norma*, can have the whole opera so cheap, will he not seize the opportunity to furnish himself therewith, instead of with the mere sheet music, that he may enjoy his song in its dramatic connection with the whole? We think the publisher can hardly count upon many purchasers who would ever think of attempting to sing the opera through in any of its characters; and therefore it strikes us that it was a needless precaution to accommodate some of the pieces to the ordinary compass of the voice by transposing them out of the original key. This, depend upon it, does impair the integrity of the work. Think of *Casta Diva* in the key of D, with two sharps! Must it not lose something of its character? And even if the transpositions are more available and therefore quite acceptable to the majority of amateurs, yet among musicians a *transposed* edition of a musical work never can pass for a standard one. We really hope that Mr. Ditson will reconsider this matter in the operas that are to follow.

One other deformity we could wish removed. The English words (copied from a London edition) are uncouth, often unsingable, and ridiculous. Think of Pollio, in quick conversational accent, at the suggestion of Norma's name exclaiming:

"Icy shudd'ring's probe me
At her more mention!"

The Italian is:

Proferesti un nome
Che il cor m'agghiaccia.

And then think of rendering the beautiful *Casta Diva*: (Chaste goddess, who dost silver o'er these sacred ancient trees, turn to us thy beautiful face without cloud, without veil!) in this way:

"Queen of Heaven! while thou art reigning,
Love upon us is still remaining,
Clad in pureness, alone disdaining
Grosser earth's nocturnal veil!"

But this is practically a trifling inconvenience, since we hold it pretty certain that whoever sings *Norma* at all will sing it in Italian, and the original Italian is here given. Besides it is easier to criticize a bad version than to make a good one. The truth is, there is no task more hopelessly difficult than that of rendering the Italian words of an opera into singable English, preserving at the same time rhyme and reason.

The interest of this volume is enhanced by some prefatory matter, containing a short Life of Bellini, a synopsis of the plot, &c. We cannot doubt the success and popularity of so fine an enterprise as this of furnishing the favorite operas entire and cheap. We only hope the future issues will be unimpeachable on the score of transposition; and if they must have English words at all, may they do better than copy the miserable London doggerel.

HOPLIT.

"HOPLIT," the name attached to the flattering German letter in our last, is literally a *nom de guerre*. It is simply the Greek *ὁπλίτης* (hoplites) which means a warrior, an armed man. Rühlmann, of Dresden, is, we understand, the real person, who has written many a sharp polemic article in defence of the Schumann and the Wagner School.

Musical Intelligence.

Local.

The Music on the Common, by the "Germania Sere-nade Band," on Wednesday Evening, was generally well selected and very beautifully executed. They adhered closely to their programme, which consisted of three parts, the first and last with reed instruments, and the second by brass band alone. Certainly the clarinets, flute, and bassoon, gave a much finer outline to the melody, and a softer richness of contrast to the harmonious ensemble. Particularly pleasing were that delicate and florid overture by Persiani, the two-part song of Mendelssohn, and a luscious Labitsky waltz, with slow introduction. The operatic arrangements from *Ernani*, *Belisario*, *La Favorita*, and *Lucrezia Borgia*, had the most familiar sound, and probably most captivated the ears of the multitude; but we should rather have heard something from *Freyshütz* or *Don Juan*.

There was one serious drawback in the difficulty of hearing so small a band of this sort. Out of the crowd we could hear nothing but the *forte* passages; while near the platform, in the crowd, though there were hundreds and hundreds of eager listeners, we were disturbed by the continual loud talk and play of restless boys. Probably the mere fact that it cost a voluntary effort of the mind to hear, was in a great measure the cause of the restlessness and noisiness. As the stiller hours came on, however, during the third part, we heard much more satisfactorily. On the whole, it was the most refined, artistic entertainment we have yet had on the Common; there were no "Wood-Ups," "Jordans," "Yankee Doodles,"—nothing more luckless than the opera airs. Some day we hope to hear a band twice or thrice as large as this, organized on the same principle. Large it must be in order to vie in far-reaching sonority with the brass bands, which are all military bands, and organized upon the principle of loudness. Meanwhile, is it not worth a little extra stillness and attention, to hear such nice music as the Germanians give us!

Foreign.

WILHELMINA CLAUS has given a second concert in London, in which she seems to have surpassed herself. She played a sonata of Mendelssohn, with violin by Piatti; a *Suite de Pièces*, of Bach; the "deep, nay almost fathomless" Beethoven Sonata in A flat, (op. 110); the little "Duet" among Mendelssohn's Songs without Words; and Chopin's *Impromptu* in A flat.

NEW PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.—The sixth and last concert (July 8th) attracted a crowded audience to Exeter Hall, and brought the second series to a close with distinction. The programme, if not precisely the best of the season, was that which contained the greatest variety. A large part was devoted to the orchestral music of Dr. Spohr, who again held the *bâton*, and was greeted with the heartiest applause.

The concert commenced with a clever and ably instrumented overture in F minor, called *Geneveva*, by Mr. Charles Horsley, whose oratorios of *David* and *Joseph* have made his name familiar to the public. The next piece was a quartet, for the ordinary stringed instruments, with orchestral accompaniments, one of the latest productions of Dr. Spohr. The form of this composition is unprecedented; nor is it likely to find imitators. The quartet is so complete in itself that the addition of orchestral accompaniments appears, to say the least, superfluous. Nevertheless, as a display of learning and ingenuity, Dr. Spohr's work is entitled to admiration. The manner in which he has preserved the fullness of the quartet, while making elaborate use of the orchestra, avoiding monotony while heightening and varying the coloring, cannot be too warmly praised.

Another remarkable composition, and one of a higher order, deeper interest, and loftier aim, was the symphony in C, for two orchestras, which Dr. Spohr has christened *Iridisches und Göttliches im Menschenleben* ("The earthly and the heavenly in man's life"). The two orchestras consist of a small band of eleven instruments (two violins, tenor, violoncello, double-bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and two horns), supposed to represent the "Gottliches," or heavenly, and a grand orchestra, which

stands for the "Iridisches," or earthly. These are in continual opposition; but in the end the good prevails, and man is saved. No musician ever set himself a grander task. The illustration of a theme so solemn and magnificent demands the loftiest qualities in an artist. That Dr. Spohr has wholly succeeded we are not prepared to assert; but that, in many places, he has risen to the highest flight of his subject is undeniable. The first movement (*Kinderwelt*) consisting of a short *adagio*, leading to an *allegretto* of great length, is intended to represent the innocence of the child, who unconscious of sin, cannot, even when yielding to temptation, be said to be corrupted. The little orchestra is principally employed in this, and with the happiest effect. No instrumental movement of Dr. Spohr's bears more continuously the mark of inspiration. The melodies—from the solo for the horn, in the introduction, to the end—are genuinely beautiful—fresher and more spontaneous, indeed, than are often suggested to their composer. Upon the instrumentation the greatest of living masters has lavished all his art. The second movement (*Zeit der Leidenschaft*) describes the period of life when passion exerts its sway. The conflicting elements which regulate the world's pursuits and pleasures here usurp the place of innocence; the past is forgotten and the future disregarded in the undivided contemplation of the present. Selfishness becomes the guiding principle, and worldly advantage the ruling influence. This portion of the symphony consists of a *larghetto*, depicting the serene state of man's mind until thus disturbed, and an *allegro agitato* in F minor, which paints the conflict that ensues. The first is appropriate, if nothing more, the last is exceedingly fine, and as suggestive as any other part of the work. In this and the third movement (*Endlicher Tag des Göttlichen*)—a *presto*, followed by an *adagio*, the first embodying the final combat between good and evil, the last the triumph of the former—the great orchestra is always prominent. The *presto* in C minor; while the *adagio*, with which the symphony concludes, in the major key, assimilates the holy rest that comes to man after the triumph of the good over the evil principle. The conception of the whole symphony is in the highest degree poetical, and its general development worthy of Dr. Spohr, among whose greatest and most lasting works it will undoubtedly rank.

VIENNA.—The Archduchess Sophia has given a musical soirée in her apartments, in which Teresa Milanollo, Thalberg and the notabilities of the Italian troupe took part.—Alexander Dreyschock is to pass the summer at Prague.—*Guillaume Tell* failed with the Italian troupe, but passed off with éclat at the Court theatre.—The German season opens under most brilliant auspices; among the artists expected from abroad, was Mlle. Johanna Wagner. Mme. Koester had sung with great success the rôles of Valentine and Bertha. Flotow's *Indra* was to be put upon the stage with a new distribution of parts, Mme. Koester replacing Mlle. Ney.

ST. PETERSBURG.—The Concert society has given its three annual concerts, in which Beethoven, Haydn and Mozart, were especially honored. Beethoven's Ninth Symphony was performed; think of Schiller's hymn to Joy: "Embrace, ye millions," &c., in Russia!—HENSEL, the gifted pianist, who had scarcely been heard in public for fifteen years, broke through his reserve and played Weber's *Concertstück* and a waltz of his own composition. His appearance in the musical world has called forth great enthusiasm.

DRESDEN.—A late number of the Police Gazette contains under the head of "Politically dangerous Individuals," the following: "WAGNER, RICHARD, late chapel-master from Dresden, one of the most prominent adherents of the revolutionary party, who was prosecuted for his participation in the revolution in Dresden in May 1849, is supposed to have the intention of quitting Zurich, where he has for some time resided, to come into Germany. A portrait of Wagner is here appended; should he be identified, he is to be handed over to the Royal State Tribunal in Dresden." Beethoven would probably be hunted in the same category, if he were living in these times.

JENNY NEY, the new-found jewel of the German Opera, has made here her debut as Norma, with the greatest éclat. TICHATSEHEK excelled also as Pollio.

BADEN, July 17.—A letter in a French journal says:—"The musical season promises to be very brilliant; the fashionable world is here in full force; nothing to be seen but kings, princes and dukes, not to speak of multitudes of gentlemen of ancient stock. The ladies make fabulous toilets, and in the most elegant circles of Paris you could hardly find more wealth, more luxury, or more taste. The orchestra which plays in the kiosk before the *maison de conversation* three times a day, is composed of fifty musicians under the direction of Herr Eichler; it

